

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In an electronic catalog maintenance system using the dictionary data given in a form of a tree structure formed by identifiers for uniquely identifying classes classifying products and attributes of the products, the dictionary data are edited by making changes including standard changes defined by a prescribed standard and out-of-standard changes not defined by the prescribed standard, and an identifier change data indicating the status of each change made by the editing and updates of identifiers to be made in the dictionary data is generated. Then, a new identifier of each class or attribute created by an out-of-standard change is issued and an old identifier of each class or attribute deleted by an out-of-standard change is retired according to the identifier change data, while storing the identifier change data in an identifier change database.

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